



**A publication of the Manitowoc County  
Master Gardener Volunteers  
November -- December 2009**

Website: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/cty/manitowoc/hort/index.html>

## ***Poinsettia Care 101***

### ***Location and Temperature***

The poinsettia thrives on bright, sunny natural daylight; at least six hours daily is recommended. Placement near a sunny window is ideal. To prolong the bright red of the bracts, temperatures ideally should not exceed 70° F during the day, or fall below 65° F at night. Be sure to avoid placing the plants near drafts, fluctuating air currents, excess heat and dry air from appliances, fireplaces or ventilating ducts. Chilling injury will occur if poinsettias are exposed to temperatures below 50° F. Frost will kill them.

### ***Water and Fertilizer***

Poinsettias do best with a moist soil condition, not too wet and not too dry. Water the poinsettia thoroughly when the soil surface feels dry to a light touch. The best indication of a thorough watering is when the water begins to seep through the drain holes at the bottom of the inner pot. Water just enough so the water barely begins to seep through these holes. Be sure to discard any excess water, as poinsettias left sitting in water may suffer from permanent root-rot damage.

It is not necessary to fertilize your poinsettias when they are in bloom during the holiday season. However, after 6-8 weeks, a balanced, all-purpose household plant fertilizer mixed ½-strength will help maintain the rich, green foliage color and promote new growth. Repeat once more in another 6-8 weeks.

### ***After the Holidays***

Even if you don't have a gardener's green thumb, you may continue to enjoy the beauty of your poinsettia throughout the year as an attractive green foliage plant. At the end of April or early May, when the bracts age and begin to turn a muddy green, cut the plant back to about 8 inches. The amount you cut from the top will depend on the shape of the plant. Some plants will need to have more cut than others to achieve a full, rounded canopy. After you cut the plant back, it will probably look rather stark, with bare branches and bluntly cut woody stems. This is not the plant's most attractive state, but by the end of May you will see vigorous new growth as the plant develops more lush green foliage. Keep the plants near a sunny window.

You may place your plants outdoors where they can bask in the warmth of summer when the outside night temperatures are warmer. Continue to water the plants regularly during the growing period. Fertilize every 3 to 4 weeks throughout the spring, summer and fall months with a well-balanced fertilizer mixed ½-strength.

***Continued on page 5***

# Garden Events

Oct 23, 2009 Raspberry Selection and Management Brown Bag Program  
12 noon Manitowoc Co. Office Complex

Homeowners have long enjoyed the fruit from raspberries. Since there are various cultivars and seasonal selections available to extend the summer growing season: cultivar selection and plant management will be the topic of discussion.

October 26, 2009 October Montly Master Gardener Volunteer Meeting  
Location: Manitowoc Co. Office Complex Time: 6:30 PM  
Speaker: Vijai Pandian to present on the Emerald Ash Borer

Oct 29, 2009 Heirloom / Antique Apple Tasting – Late-Season Apples Green Bay, WI  
Our last apple tasting event will feature the late season apples. These are the largest selection of apples, the longest storing apples and the best of the best! From pink skinned to pink fleshed they cover colors and tastes beyond your imagination – and with each apple comes a story of its origin. Join us for the last and see we saved the best for last! Sponsored by the NEW MGA. From 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. at the Ag & Extension Service Center, 1150 Bellevue Street Green Bay. \$2. Pre-registration is required and space is limited. For more information or to register call Debi at (920) 465-8512.

Nov 13, 2009 Landscaping to Attract Wildlife Brown Bag Program  
12 noon Manitowoc Co. Office Complex

Loss of habitat is a major threat to wildlife. As a result, if wildlife populations are to be successfully conserved, we must provide habitat for them on private lands. Habitat restoration is especially critical where urbanization and agriculture development has eliminated most natural areas. So providing backyard habitat for wildlife also is important for landscape aspect for the appreciation of nature. Join us as we address landscape approaches to improve wildlife habitat.

November 16, 2009 November Montly Master Gardener Volunteer Meeting <---- **Note Date Change**  
Location: Manitowoc Co. Office Complex Time: 6:30 pm  
Speaker: Bob Kellner to present on Holiday Decorating

Nov 27 - Dec 27, 2009

13th Annual WPS Garden of Lights Green Bay Botanical Garden, Green Bay, WI  
A holiday favorite featuring over 200,000 lights crafted in flowers, butterflies, and other botanical themes. Walk the trail or take a horse-drawn wagon ride (subject to availability). Indoor garden railroad also featured. Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays from 5:00 to 9:00 p.m. Walking Admission: \$5 adults, \$3 children ages 5-12; Wagon rides: \$7 adults, \$5 children ages 5-12. For more information, contact the Green Bay Botanical Garden, 2600 Larsen Road, P.O. Box 12644, Green Bay, WI 54307-2644 at (920) 490-9457 or by fax at (920) 490-9461.

Dec 2, 2009 Herbs of Christmas Gardens of the Fox Cities, Appleton, WI

Learn the legends, lore and history of the Christmas plants rooted in the Yule Season in this class from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m.. \$16 (\$8 member). For more information or to register contact the Gardens of the Fox Cities, 1313 E. Witzke Blvd., Appleton WI 54911 at (920) 993-1900.

December 7, 2009 December Monthly Meeting / Christmas Gathering / Potluck  
6 PM at the Hollen home Optional \$10 gift exchange

Dec 18, 2009 Fruit Crop Pest Management Tactics Brown Bag Program  
12 noon Manitowoc Co. Office Complex

Gardeners are disappointed when a portion or all of a small or tree fruit planting dies or the quality of fruit produced leaves a lot to be desired. Injury to the trunk, crown (area at the soil line) or roots generally is the primary cause of death to plants and can be caused by winter cold, poorly-drained soil, mouse and rabbit feeding damage, root and crown diseases and borers – alone or in combination – can all cause loss of plants. Reduced fruit quality is often the result of poor pest management during the growing season. Join us for a review of the problems and tactics to improve the situations.

January 10, 2010 MEMBERSHIP DUES are due to Doris -- see article for more info

Jan 22-23, 2010 Garden Visions Stevens Point, WI

This conference for northern climate gardeners is sponsored by the North Central Wisconsin MGA. Keynote speakers are Paul Tukay, HGTV host, author and founder of safelawns.org, who will speak on Safe Lawns: How to Create Beautiful Landscaping Naturally; and, Mike Nowak, Chicago WCPT radio host and founder of Midwest Ecological Landscaping Association presenting, I'm Not Really a Garden Expert, I Just Play One on the Radio. Several breakout sessions, pre-conference workshops on Friday from 6:30 to 9:00 p.m., and an optional movie screening of "A Chemical Reaction" on Friday evening. The Garden Visions Photography contest winners will be on exhibit throughout the conference. Registration deadline Jan 13. For more information or to register (beginning Nov 15) email [gardenvisions@gmail.com](mailto:gardenvisions@gmail.com).



### *Christmas Gathering*

**Date:** December 7th, 2009

**Location:** Hollen Residence  
508 N Rapids Road  
Manitowoc

**Time:** 6 pm

Bring your favorite dish for a  
Christmas Potluck.



### *MEMBERSHIP DUES*

Membership Dues of \$10 are due to our Treasurer, Doris, by January 10, 2010. Checks payable to Master Gardeners of Manitowoc Co. You can remit by mail to Doris A. Magyar, 14409 Hwy 42, Two Rivers, WI 54241 or at the montly meetings. All dues must be paid or you will be DROPPED as a member according to the new rule that has gone into effect.

There will be an optional \$10 gift exchange.

# *Caring For Amaryllis*

## *Quick Tips:*

- Planting Period: October until the end of April.
- Flowering Period: Late December until the end of June.
- Flowering time is 7-10 weeks.
- Larger bulbs produce more flowers.
- Always store un-planted bulbs in a cool place between 40-50 deg. F.

## *Amaryllis-One of a Kind*

Of all flowering bulbs, amaryllis are the easiest to bring to bloom. This can be accomplished indoors or out, and over an extended period of time. The amaryllis originated in South America's tropical regions and has the botanical name Hippeastrum. The large flowers and ease with which they can be brought to bloom make amaryllis popular and in demand worldwide. The amaryllis comes in many beautiful varieties including various shades of red, white, pink, salmon and orange. There are also many striped and multicolored varieties, usually combining shades of pink or red with white.

## *Preparation for Planting*

The base and roots of the bulb should be placed in lukewarm water for a few hours. Remember, if you cannot plant the bulbs immediately after receiving them, store them at a cool temperature between 40-50 degrees F.

## *Planting*

Plant bulbs in a nutritious potting compost, many are available pre-mixed. Plant the bulb up to its neck in the potting compost, being careful not to damage the roots. Press the soil down firmly to set the bulb securely in place after planting.

## *Placement and Watering*

Plant the bulb, or place the potted bulb in a warm place with direct light since heat is necessary for the development of the stems. The ideal temperature is 68 to 70 degrees F. Water sparingly until the stem appears, then, as the bud and leaves appear, gradually water more. At this point, the stem will grow rapidly and flowers will develop after it has reached full growth.

## *Flowering Period*

Bulbs will flower in 7-10 weeks as a general rule. In winter the flowering time will be longer than in spring. Set up your planting schedule between October and April with this in mind. To achieve continuous bloom, plant at intervals of 2 weeks for stunning color in your home or garden.

## *After-Bloom Care*

**After-Flowering.** After the amaryllis has stopped flowering, it can be made to flower again. Cut the old flowers from the stem after flowering, and when the stem starts to sag, cut it back to the top of the bulb.

**Leaf Growth and Development.** Continue to water and fertilize as normal all summer, or for at least 5-6 months, allowing the leaves to fully develop and grow. When the leaves begin to yellow, which normally occurs in the early fall, cut the leaves back to about 2 inches from the top of the bulb and remove the bulb from the soil.

**Bulb Storage.** Clean the bulb and place it in a cool (40-50 deg. F), dark place such as the crisper of your refrigerator for a minimum of 6 weeks. Caution: Do not store amaryllis bulbs in a refrigerator that contains apples, this will sterilize the bulbs. Store the bulbs for a minimum of 6 weeks.

**Plant Again.** After 6 weeks you may remove bulbs whenever you would like to plant them. Plant bulbs 8 weeks before you would like them to bloom.

Continued from cover story...

Around June 15th you may wish to transplant your poinsettias into larger pots, about 2" to 4" bigger than the original inner pot. Use a soil mix that incorporates a considerable amount of organic matter such as peat moss. You may also try planting them into a well-prepared garden bed rich in organic matter and with good drainage. Your poinsettias will do best in a protected area, preferably along a south garden wall. Immediately after transplanting, be sure to water thoroughly.

### Re-flowering

The poinsettia is a photoperiod plant, which means it begins to set buds and produce flowers as the winter nights become longer. The plants will naturally come into full bloom during November or December depending upon the flowering response time of the particular variety. This can be tricky to do outside of a controlled greenhouse environment, because any stray artificial light such as that from a street light, pool light or household lamp could delay or halt the re-flowering of the plants.

Starting October 1, the plants must be kept in complete darkness for 14 continuous hours each night. This can be accomplished by moving the plants to a dark room or placing a large box over them. During this period, the plants require 6 to 8 hours of bright sunlight and night temperatures between 60° and 70° F. If the temperature is too high or too low, the setting of the flower buds may be delayed or halted. The blooming process may also be delayed or disrupted by any stray light that may shine near the plants during the critical darkness period. This regimen must continue for approximately 8 to 10 weeks in order for the plants to develop a colorful display of blooms for the holiday season. Obviously, the re-flowering process takes more than a little vigilance, perseverance and patience to be successful.

### Poinsettias Are Not Poisonous

Since around 1919, an unsubstantiated tale has circulated concerning the alleged poisonous nature of poinsettias. To alleviate the public's fear, the Society of American Florists and Ohio State University conducted a scientific investigation into the safety of the poinsettia plant. The Ohio State University research on the poinsettia plant effectively disproved the charge that the poinsettia is harmful to human and animal health. Of course, the poinsettia, like all ornamental plants, is not intended for human and animal consumption.

<http://www.extension.umn.edu/yardandgarden/ygbriefs/h102poinsettia.html>



# MASTER GARDENERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY

## MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: August 24, 2009  
TIME: 6:00 p.m.  
PLACE: West of the Lake Gardens  
ATTENDANCE: 23  
EDUCATION: Don Cisler – Garden Tour – 70 min.

The August meeting was called to order by President Renee Lemberger. The reports from the secretary and treasurer were approved as read.

### OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Dorothy is taking orders for the 2010 Garden Journals.
- 2) Volunteer hour sheets need to be turned in to Dorothy no later than Oct. 1st.
- 3) Judy Lango has fliers available for the HFM fundraiser.

### NEW BUSINESS

- 1) A discussion took place as to whether we are going to have a fall plant exchange this year. A motion was made to not have one so that more plants will be available for the spring plant sale.
- 2) A business meeting is scheduled for September 22 at 6 p.m. at the Manitowoc County Office Complex. Everyone is welcome to attend and make suggestions for future meetings.
- 3) A list of education hours from the 2008-2009 meetings will be posted on the MG website.
- 4) The next meeting will be held on September 28 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Tisler  
Secretary

# MASTER GARDENERS OF MANITOWOC COUNTY

## MONTHLY MEETING

DATE: September 28, 2009  
TIME: 6:30 p.m.  
PLACE: Manitowoc County Office Complex  
ATTENDANCE: 22  
EDUCATION: Diana of the Flower Gallery – Decorating for the Rose Bowl Parade – 60 min.

President Renee Lemberger thanked Diana for a wonderful presentation and called the September meeting to order. Reports from the secretary and treasurer were approved as read.

### OLD BUSINESS

- 1) Volunteer hours need to be turned in to Dorothy Bugs by October 1st.
- 2) The WIMGA state conference will this weekend.

### NEW BUSINESS

- 1) Pat Hollen gave a summary of our recent business meeting and the programs planned through 2010. She noted that the November 2009 meeting will be held a week earlier than usual on November 16 at 6:30 p.m. The Christmas party will be on December 7th at 6 p.m/ at the Hollen home. It will be a potluck supper with an optional gift exchange.
- 2) Renee stated that the Manitowoc Office Complex building will now be locked at 6 p.m. and whoever has the keys is responsible for being sure that no one remains in the building and that the doors are secure.
- 3) A discussion took place regarding our membership with the GB Botanical Gardens. A club membership of \$60 is no longer offered. A motion was made and seconded that we give them a \$60 donation.
- 4) Woodland Dunes currently has a fund drive and Doris suggested that we donate to it. We have a \$100 membership renewable in March of 2010. A motion was made and seconded that we donate \$100 to their fund drive.
- 5) The 2010 WIMGA annual conference will be July 23rd and 24th in Sheboygan.
- 6) The date for cleanup at the zoo will be determined at our October meeting.
- 7) We have been asked if we want to take care of a wildflower bed on the west side of the parking lot at the Manitowoc County Office building. It was decided not to do this.
- 8) Doris, Dorothy and Renee recently attended a NE Wisconsin regional meeting. A number of items were discussed including insurance and membership.
- 9) Shirley Scriver informed us that she will be moving out of the area and thanked us for her experiences with the Manitowoc County Master Gardeners.

The meeting was adjourned at 8 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Tisler  
Secretary

Manitowoc County Master Gardeners  
Manitowoc County UW-Extension  
4319 Expo Drive, Po Box 1150  
Manitowoc WI 54220

**Have a Happy  
Holiday  
Season!**